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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women: review of mainstreaming in organizations of the United Nations system

Assessment of the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report summarizes information provided by entities of the United Nations system on their efforts to implement the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001. It highlights institutional, financial and coordination aspects of implementation, as well as remaining obstacles. Information about activities undertaken by United Nations entities in the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action are contained in the annex.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 1996/34, the Economic and Social Council endorsed the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001, and requested the Secretary-General to submit a progress report on the implementation of the plan for mid-term review. The mid-term review (E/CN.6/1998/3) was submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session, in March 1998, as well as to the Committee on Programme and Coordination (CPC) and the Economic and Social Council for their review. In its resolution 1998/11, the Economic and Social Council welcomed the mid-term review of the implementation of the plan, and endorsed the recommendations and further action contained therein.

2. In its resolution 1996/34, the Economic and Social Council also called for a new draft plan to cover the period 2002-2005. Considering that the new draft plan should take into consideration the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly on progress achieved in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, in its resolution 1999/16 the Economic and Social Council invited the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, to formulate the plan for the period 2002-2005 in two phases. The first phase would consist of an assessment of activities undertaken by the United Nations system, obstacles encountered and lessons learned from the current plan, and the system-wide process of its implementation. The second phase would consist of a new plan that would reflect the growing emphasis on action and delivery. The present report constitutes the first phase of the process. The second phase will be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-fifth session, in 2001. In its resolution 52/231, the General Assembly requested that a comparative report be prepared on how different categories of projects and programmes of United Nations organizations include women's interests and gender mainstreaming issues and on resources allocated in that regard. The information requested in that resolution has been integrated into the present report (see also E/CN.6/2000/PC/3). The present report is an integral part of the review and appraisal of the progress made to implement the Beijing Platform for Action. It represents the input of the United Nations system of organizations into achieving the goals of the Platform with respect to the 12 critical areas of concern, and it should be read in conjunction with document E/CN.6/2000/PC/2.

3. In order to prepare the assessment report of the system-wide medium-term plan, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat sought information from all entities of the United Nations system on the implementation of the plan, including the recommendations for further actions contained in the mid-term review of its implementation that had been endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1998/11. Those recommendations primarily suggest action which would further a coordinated and cohesive approach to the work of the United Nations in relation to the system-wide medium-term plan and the Platform for Action. As of 14 December 1999, the following 27 entities had responded:

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Division for the Advancement of Women
Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women

Population Division

Statistics Division

Department of Public Information

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

International Trade Centre (ITC)

Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

United Nations University (UNU)

World Bank

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

4. Responses indicate that over the period of implementation of the plan, there has been considerable progress in implementing the broad range of activities that it envisages, as well as policy commitment to the goals of the Fourth World Conference on Women. In addition, responses indicate that a number of obstacles to the implementation of the plan have been encountered, including uneven understanding of the implications of gender factors; failure to integrate gender fully into all mechanisms; lack of indicators to assess progress made in gender integration; lack of data disaggregated by sex; institutional constraints; and lack of staff capacity.

5. Section II of the report provides an overview of progress in implementation by entities of the 12 critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action; more detail is provided in the annex. Section III outlines the institutional and financial arrangements established to facilitate implementation of the Platform for Action and the system-wide medium-term plan. Where appropriate, good practices, lessons learned and obstacles to implementation are indicated. Information provided by respondents on actions taken pursuant to the recommendations of the mid-term review of the system-wide medium-term plan are provided throughout the report.

II. Overview of progress in implementation in the 12 critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action

Women and poverty

6. United Nations system action in this area has stressed the importance of empowering women to raise their standard of living and reduce their poverty. Activities have included poverty reduction through microcredit activities, including via the establishment of revolving funds, and skills training, particularly with respect to trade, market standards and the means to access international markets and negotiate favourable terms and conditions. Efforts have also sought to facilitate women's access to financial services, including through the funding of microfinance institutions. Several initiatives have emphasized the importance of access to property by women. The substantive or geographical focus of several programmes have also been redirected to include women who are in post-conflict situations or are affected by the Asian economic crisis as special target groups.

Education and training of women

7. In this area, United Nations system activities have underscored the view that access to information, education and training is of key importance to women's empowerment. Efforts have highlighted education for girls, equality of access to basic education and training programmes for girls' education. Family life education directed at both in- and out-of-school children and youth has been emphasized, while support has also been given to education for young mothers, the promotion of literacy and post-literacy programmes for women's empowerment. Training for women in leadership, management and entrepreneurship has also been a focus of attention.

Women and health

8. The main concentration of activities in addressing this area has been on reproductive and sexual health and rights, sexually transmitted diseases, including human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), and the promotion of safe motherhood and reduction of maternal and child mortality and morbidity. Harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation, and the health consequences of the various manifestations of violence against women have been emphasized, as well as gender differentials in tropical diseases. A greater focus on health promotion and the prevention of non-communicable diseases that affect women, as well as the health, social and economic consequences of tobacco and alcohol use for women and their families, has become evident during the reporting period.

Violence against women

9. The focus of activities in this area has been information collection and research, directed at identifying the root causes of violence against women and assessing the effectiveness of preventative strategies. Efforts to increase awareness of the issue, both generally and in specific sectors, such as among police or health personnel, have also been undertaken, mainly in the context of regional inter-agency anti-violence campaigns, and have included an inter-agency videoconference coordinated by UNIFEM, held on 8 March 1999. Attention has been directed at particular manifestations of violence against women, including harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation and trafficking in women and girls.

Women and armed conflict

10. Under this area, activities have been directed at ensuring that a gender perspective is fully incorporated into humanitarian policies and activities. Attention has been paid to the effect of statutory and customary property laws on the situation of women in situations of armed conflict and post-conflict reconstruction, and to the provision of basic health services and reproductive health care to displaced women and those in emergency and crisis situations. Activities have also sought to increase the participation of women in decision-making in refugee camps and to support women's initiatives for peace, redefine male roles and masculine identities and promote a culture of peace.

Women and the economy

11. In this area, activities have included efforts directed towards the measurement of women's work, including that in the informal sector, and the development of tools to describe the economic activities of women. Activities to increase awareness of women's economic position, particularly in the context of globalization and structural adjustment programmes and other economic policies, have also been undertaken. Efforts have also been directed at the promotion of women's participation in economic development, including in self-employment and business enterprises, as well as ensuring gender equality in the world of work.

Women in power and decision-making

12. In this area, United Nations activities have been focused on increasing the number of women in decision-making positions at all levels and various sectors, as well as empowering women to become active participants in all forms of political structures and decision-making processes. Efforts have included the design of a set of indicators of women's participation and leadership, the provision of women with adequate skills to enable them to become efficient managers and promoting the organization of women in trade unions. Support for women parliamentarians and efforts to sensitize female and male parliamentarians to gender issues have continued. Such efforts have also been made with respect to female and male government ministers, including those in key finance and economic posts. Strategies to encourage the participation of women in non-governmental organizations and networks have also been implemented.

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

13. Activities in this area have concentrated on enhancing methods of data collection, in particular sex-disaggregated data and database development. Efforts have also been directed at strengthening the capacity and catalytic role of national machineries for the advancement of women, including through the compilation of comprehensive directories, the organization of expert group meetings and assistance for the development of gender policies and action plans. Support has been provided for the establishment of bodies to advise on the gender implications of particular issues, such as human settlements and the

promotion of technical cooperation, as a mechanism to promote effective partnerships among intergovernmental organizations, Governments, research institutes and the private sector.

Human rights of women

14. The focus of the United Nations system in this area has been to emphasize women's equal and full enjoyment of their rights, with a human-rights based approach to activities, including with regard to the development and eradication of poverty, which is increasingly being adopted throughout the system. Activities have been directed to capacity-building, with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women being used as the central advocacy, implementation, monitoring and empowerment framework. Training of women's rights advocates and support for the preparation of reports required under United Nations human rights treaties, including the above-mentioned Convention and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, have been provided, as has support for the review and revision of discriminatory laws and judicial reform. The human rights implications of concerns, such as violence against women, trafficking in women and children, HIV/AIDS, humanitarian assistance and shelter, have also been increasingly recognized and the gender dimensions of the enjoyment of human rights acknowledged.

Women and the media

15. In this area, United Nations system activities have been directed at the promotion of a positive, well-balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women and girls in the media and at increasing the attention of the media to issues concerning women, as well as advocacy with regard to those issues. During the reporting period, although efforts have been directed at traditional media, particular emphasis has been placed by the system on the Internet and the World Wide Web and effective strategies to manage and share information on such issues as the gender mainstreaming strategy. Training has also been provided to women journalists, including in regard to modern communication management techniques and the production of television news programmes.

Women and the environment

16. Activities in this area have sought to underline the importance of ensuring that women's contribution to environmental protection is recognized and protected, and that gender concerns are reflected in policy-making and environmental decision-making. Support for women's participation in conferences concerning such issues as water resources, planning and management, interdisciplinary approaches to gender, environment and sustainable development, and the development of tools to facilitate gender-responsive environmental planning and management have been among the systems' responses.

The girl child

17. Efforts to eliminate gender-based disparities between girls and boys have been the focus of United Nations activities under this area. Activities have included database development on child mortality by sex and analytical studies of gender differences in infant and child mortality. Strategies to prevent and eliminate child labour, including the worst forms of child labour and trafficking, have also been introduced, with the 1999 International Labour Conference adopting the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour. The critical importance of girls' education for their equal enjoyment of rights and full participation in the political, social and economic development of their communities has been emphasized. Gender-sensitive prototype reading material which responds to the actual needs of girls on such topics as child marriage and HIV/AIDS has been produced and training of personnel for non-formal education provided. Provision of access to and information about reproductive and sexual health services for adolescents has been emphasized, as has the health of adolescent girls.

III. Institutional and financial arrangements and obstacles encountered in implementation

18. Respondents reported on institutional and financial arrangements congruent with the Beijing Platform for Action and the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001, many of which have built on developments outlined in the mid-term review of the implementation of the plan.

A. Implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy

19. The mid-term review provided details of mandates for mainstreaming gender designed and endorsed by intergovernmental bodies. Responses include reference to recent intergovernmental mandates, including agreed conclusions 1998/1 of the Economic and Social Council adopted at its humanitarian affairs segment, in which the Council requested the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator to ensure that a gender perspective is fully integrated into humanitarian activities and policies. In its agreed conclusions 1999/1, the Council recognized that all humanitarian emergencies have gender-specific impact, and stressed the need to integrate a gender perspective in the planning and implementation of activities.

20. During the reporting period, the World Telecommunication Development Conference adopted resolution 7 on gender and telecommunication policy in developing countries, in which, *inter alia*, a task force on gender issues was established to incorporate a gender perspective in the campaign for the universal right to communication. The task force has met three times since its establishment in March 1998 and approved targets and work plans for the year 2000 at its meeting in September 1999. In October 1998, the Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) adopted a resolution on the inclusion of a gender perspective in the work of ITU, including its work programmes, leadership and human resources development activities. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has finalized a policy statement on gender mainstreaming and women's human rights, and as part of its mission, aims and strategic objectives for 1999-2001 a work plan on gender and the human rights of women, emphasizing the development of internal capacity in this context, has been prepared. The World Bank's institutional and operational priorities for gender mainstreaming will be established in a sector strategy paper on gender which is currently being prepared. In compliance with the Council's 1999 agreed conclusions, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is currently introducing a gender perspective into all its activities, and has ensured that gender has been incorporated into the consolidated inter-agency appeal process.

21. Several entities have built on existing institutional commitments to the gender mainstreaming strategy. For example, a 1997 UNDP guidance note on gender mainstreaming, which details policy, programme and the administrative implications of UNDP's commitment to the gender mainstreaming strategy, builds on direct line 11, a communication from the UNDP Administrator to all resident representatives of November 1996, which identified UNDP priorities for gender mainstreaming and defined its relationship with UNIFEM. In 1997, the Executive Director of UNFPA issued a memorandum to all staff indicating that staff at all levels were responsible and would be held accountable for effective gender mainstreaming in their work, which built on earlier guidelines on UNFPA support for mainstreaming gender issues in population and development programmes. The 1998 WHO restructuring, particularly in the area of women's health and notably the creation of the Department of Women's Health, has strengthened the organization's capacity for implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy. In 1999, the WHO Cabinet adopted a policy on mainstreaming gender into all policies, programmes and projects.

22. Other entities have carried out projects to entrench their commitments to the gender mainstreaming strategy. In 1997, the Women and Development Unit of ECLAC carried out a pilot project with the assistance of the German Technical Cooperation Agency, directed at mainstreaming a gender perspective explicitly and systematically into all projects and programmes of ECLAC. During 1999, a second two-year phase was introduced which aims to consolidate and strengthen an institutional approach to mainstreaming the gender perspective. The activities of this phase will concentrate on cooperation for development by fostering a similar process in the sectoral ministries of selected Member States. Also during the reporting period, at its twenty-seventh session (Aruba, 11-16 May 1998), ECLAC approved a new subprogramme on mainstreaming the gender perspective into the main spheres of the regional development process which will be included in the ECLAC programme of work for 2000-2001. The secretariat has continued to report twice yearly to the presiding officers of the Regional Conference on Women of Latin America and the Caribbean on its efforts to integrate the gender perspective into the Commission's programme of work. Several UNIFEM

projects, including in South Asia and with respect to the Southern African Development Community (SADC), have focused on increasing the extent to which gender is mainstreamed into development policies and practices, and include training and financial support components. The Division for the Advancement of Women, in close collaboration with UNDP Africa, is conducting an assessment of gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women in UNDP-supported activities in sub-Saharan Africa. The review, which is funded by UNDP, covers programmes, projects and activities undertaken and/or approved in the period of 1995 to 1998 in the areas of governance, poverty eradication and women-specific activities in 22 countries.

23. During 1997, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights commenced implementation of a project, developed in collaboration with the Division for the Advancement of Women, to make gender equality central to its technical cooperation programme. Project activities include the development of detailed guidelines for Office staff and consultants for use in the preparation and execution of training. Efforts have also been made to incorporate gender and the human rights of women in the work of field offices, including monitoring and technical assistance, and to carry out activities focusing on those issues. For example, a gender perspective is integrated into the Office's work in Cambodia, while at the same time support is also provided specifically to NGOs working on women's rights. UNDP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, through the Office of the Resident Coordinator for Afghanistan, are working towards the integration of a gender equality perspective in their work in that country. This effort is guided by the gender adviser appointed in 1999, following the recommendation of the United Nations inter-agency gender mission to Afghanistan in 1997, led by the Special Adviser on gender issues and advancement of women.

24. Several responses provided information on gender sensitization packages which suggest ways to incorporate gender issues into particular contexts. For example, FAO has developed a package to encourage incorporation of gender issues into agricultural engineering projects, while its forestry training package has been adapted for Central America and translated into Spanish, and will also be translated into Chinese and French.

25. Responses also drew attention to workshops and seminars aimed at increasing capacity for implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy. Thus, ECLAC has organized a series of brief internal seminars to discuss the process of mainstreaming the gender perspective into its research and cooperation activities, while FAO reported on a December 1997 workshop on the theme "Gender and participation in agricultural planning: harvesting best practices", which aimed to evaluate experiences in gender-sensitive participatory rural appraisal and in setting up mechanisms for needs-based planning processes. A comprehensive package based on the outcome of the workshop, consisting of key issues papers and a planning framework, training materials, country case studies and a video, is under preparation. During 1998, the ILO conducted several workshops to increase competence for gender mainstreaming advocacy, including a team-building workshop for gender focal points at headquarters; three regional consultation and strategy planning meetings for gender specialists and focal points, and an interregional gender consultation meeting at the ILO centre at Turin. Specific training material was developed for each of those activities, including a booklet on guidelines for organizing gender training. During 1999, within the framework of the ILO action plan on gender mainstreaming for gender equality in the world of work, a comprehensive capacity-building programme to enhance the gender competence of ILO staff at headquarters was also initiated. In collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner Human Rights and UNIFEM, the Division for the Advancement of Women organized a three-day workshop on gender integration into the United Nations human rights system which brought together the human rights special mechanisms and the chairpersons of United Nations human rights treaty bodies. Emphasis was placed on the need for those mechanisms to take a gender perspective regularly and systematically into account in the implementation of their mandates, their analysis and reporting. The Office also organized a half-day session on gender during the annual meeting of heads of field presences in August/ September 1999, during which a checklist on gender mainstreaming into Office field activities was distributed. UNEP's first workshop on streamlining gender was held in August 1999 with the participation of professional staff, including at senior management levels.

26. In order to build capacity for gender mainstreaming that can address individual and organizational needs, UNDP has put in place a learning, consultation, briefing, workshops, tracking and evaluation system. A core set of five country office tools and advocacy documents have been developed: a gender mainstreaming strategy; a gender mainstreaming briefing kit for orientation of new staff and visiting missions; a national gender profile; a gender-sensitive national human development report; and gender-sensitive programme and project documents.

27. Specific guidelines or manuals on the gender mainstreaming strategy have been developed by a number of entities, including UNFPA, which has produced guidelines on support for mainstreaming gender issues in population and development, and UNESCO, which has developed guidelines for the incorporation of gender issues in evaluation and monitoring activities and a checklist on the incorporation of gender guidelines in the evaluation of UNESCO programmes. The UNFPA guidelines for mainstreaming gender issues in population and development programmes identify goals and tasks and establish accountability for gender mainstreaming at all levels. A programmer's guide to the gender mainstreaming strategy, outlining steps to be taken to ensure that gender is mainstreamed at different stages of country programmes, has been developed by UNICEF; it is being translated and awaits field testing. UNICEF has also developed specific guidance materials on gender mainstreaming in sectoral programmes, including water and sanitation, girls' education, safe motherhood and maternal and neonatal survival, youth health and development and emergency situations. UNEP's revised manual on project formulation, monitoring and evaluation includes a chapter on gender-sensitive guidelines which apply to all policies, programmes and projects, which have been used to screen at least 40 projects.

28. Several responses highlighted systems to monitor and evaluate the impact of gender mainstreaming initiatives, including guidelines such as those issued by FAO in 1998, which require a section in all evaluation reports on gender equality and project implementation and results. The FAO Programme Committee also requested a first corporate review on implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy, which took place during 1999. UNESCO indicated that a new programming and evaluation software system is being installed in relation to all UNESCO activities which will allow for systematic monitoring of its work regarding women, girls and gender equality. A progress report on its gender mainstreaming efforts was prepared by UNICEF for consideration by its Executive Board in June 1999. The report assesses progress in implementation of UNICEF's 1994 and 1996 gender mainstreaming strategies, the Platform for Action and the 1997 agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council, and identifies emerging priorities and areas which require strengthening.

29. Action plans for gender mainstreaming have also been adopted during the reporting period. In 1997, Habitat adopted a plan entitled "Comprehensive policy and action plan: a gendered habitat", outlining institutional arrangements. Those arrangements were commended at the seventeenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements, in May 1999. During 1999, through a participatory process, the ILO developed and adopted an action plan on gender mainstreaming for gender equality, the objective of which is to institutionalize gender mainstreaming in the ILO as a strategy to promote gender equality. The plan seeks to strengthen institutional arrangements for gender mainstreaming, introduce accountability for managers and monitoring mechanisms; allocate adequate resources to gender mainstreaming; build effective staff gender competence; and improve gender balance. Senior management met to assess progress in the implementation of gender mainstreaming and the identification of key areas for further action in October 1999.

30. As sustained gender mainstreaming is dependent on access to information on methodologies for gender mainstreaming strategies, the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality (IACWGE) entrusted a task force, consisting of UNIFEM, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and Habitat, to prepare a system-wide compilation of good practices in gender mainstreaming and implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The results of that special joint project will be available on the Internet for the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century", to be held from 5 to 9 June 2000.

B. Gender analysis training

31. A number of responses reported on the introduction of gender analysis training programmes, as well as those which built on existing programmes. In 1997, the ECA African Centre for Women designed a training programme to introduce the concept of gender analysis to ECA staff. In 1997 and 1998, ECA senior-level staff, staff of the African Centre for Women and its cabinet office, and gender focal points of divisions and subregional development centres were trained. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs organized training sessions for its New York and Geneva staff in July and October 1999, respectively, while in the same year the gender unit of Habitat began a gender information programme and introduced gender-awareness training for staff. Orientation workshops for UNIFEM and its partners on gender concerns with respect to HIV/AIDS and development have been conducted through a joint initiative with UNFPA and UNAIDS, and the ILO has organized 10 training workshops for its field officers in order to strengthen gender competence.

32. FAO adapted its ongoing socio-economic and gender analysis initiative, which aims to enhance the capacity of member countries to undertake participatory socio-economic and gender analysis, as well as to assist development professionals in mainstreaming gender into their work for use in training of trainers programmes in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Near East. In addition, other training activities have been carried out by various divisions of FAO, and guidelines, manuals and a video have been developed to promote a gender-sensitive participatory nutrition approach. UNESCO noted that its regular training for staff on the gender mainstreaming strategy will be boosted during 2000 by a more elaborate training programme on the importance of gender mainstreaming and how it can be achieved. A review of UNICEF experiences in capacity-building and gender training was undertaken in 1997. The review concluded that gender training, which since 1993 has been provided to over 1,250 staff and 9,500 national counterparts through over 275 workshops at headquarters and in the regions, has been effective in ensuring that greater attention is paid to gender concerns in country programmes and in promoting actions for mainstreaming gender in national development policies and programmes. Nevertheless, gaps remained in the consistent translation of global concepts into practical, country-level programming strategies. In this regard, the review underlined the need for simple guidance materials outlining practical measures for gender mainstreaming at all stages of the country programming process, and for consistent commitment and compliance for integration and effective monitoring of results.

33. Several entities reported on the results of specific efforts with regard to gender mainstreaming. ECLAC indicated that a P-4 post to support gender mainstreaming and the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan had been approved by ECLAC States members, while UNEP indicated that during the 2000-2001 biennium, a P-4 programme officer's post will strengthen its gender mainstreaming activities.

34. Responses highlighted the importance of the development of training materials on gender issues. For example, UNFPA indicated that a comprehensive training manual for all staff on gender, population and development and the operational implications of those concepts was being developed. The capacity of OSAGI to promote greater interest in and support and monitor efforts to implement the mainstreaming strategy has been strengthened by the appointment of a Principal Officer at D-1 level and the pending appointment of a P-3 officer. The Special Adviser has continued to visit United Nations entities for high-level discussions on the importance of the mainstreaming strategy. Since September 1999, the Principal Officer has collaborated with and supported the efforts of various United Nations departments and one regional commission. Work is in progress to develop materials and tools for implementation of the mainstreaming strategy, including fact sheets and good practice examples and a framework for competence development for mainstreaming in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources Management.

C. Gender units and gender focal points

35. The practice of designating gender focal points reported on in the mid-term review has continued. Tasked by IACWGE, UNFPA has prepared a study on the role of gender focal points within the United Nations system which will be submitted to the fifth session of IACWGE, in February 2000, and made available to the special session of the General Assembly in June 2000.

36. FAO reported that many divisions and departments have designated such focal points, while a gender specialist is outposted to the five regional offices of FAO. There is extensive collaboration among those officers and technical officers at the regional and subregional levels. Each of the World Bank's six regional vice-presidencies, which are responsible for lending activities, has a gender focal point or unit, while such focal points also exist in many of the Bank's field offices. The ITC commitment to the incorporation of the gender perspective into all technical cooperation activities for trade and development is manifested by the designation of the focal point at the level of Director. The ITC focal point is supported by a technical coordinator for technical cooperation projects and staff member of the personnel section of ITC. Within WMO, a three-person team, reporting directly to the Secretary-General, acts as focal point for women's issues, while the Director General of WIPO nominated a gender focal point in 1997, *inter alia*, to initiate gender mainstreaming in the organization. UNDP has created a network of gender focal points at headquarters and in country offices in order to facilitate, coordinate, support and strengthen the process of gender mainstreaming. UNDP has also enhanced the capacity of country office focal points, including through the designation of a programme staff person and a representative of senior management, who are required to ensure attention to gender issues during decision-making. A gender advisory committee, comprising gender focal points from UNDP headquarters and UNIFEM, has been established to guide UNDP work on gender policy, strategy and capacity-development initiatives. UNICEF indicated that it currently has a network of about 110 gender focal points, who meet regularly to review programme experiences and define emerging areas for action. Regional networks of UNICEF gender focal points meet yearly to identify priorities for joint action.

37. Entities which appointed gender focal points during the reporting period included ITU, whose Secretary-General appointed the first focal point in August 1998 following recommendations of the Staff Council. In 1998, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs created focal points for gender issues in its offices in New York and Geneva. A gender adviser has been appointed in the Office of the Resident Coordinator in Afghanistan and works with the United Nations entities. Pursuant to UNEP Governing Council decision 20/9 on the role of women in environment and development of 5 February 1999, a Professional staff member has been undertaking tasks relating to the role of women in environment and development. During the next biennium, a post at the P-4 level dedicated to gender will be established to strengthen UNEP's gender mainstreaming efforts. UNCTAD's focal point, a staff member at P-5 level, acts as ex officio member of the Departmental Panel on Placement and Promotion and is assisted by another officer financed through extrabudgetary funds. ITC's focal point is at Director level and is supported by several other professional officers.

38. The creation of senior gender specialist posts for regional offices has continued, with the ILO creating three additional posts during the reporting period — two in Asia and one in Africa — thus bringing the number of senior gender specialists to seven. In order to strengthen competence, the ILO has organized a team-building workshop for gender focal points at ILO headquarters; three regional consultations and strategy planning meetings for gender specialists and focal points; and an interregional consultation. With the collaboration of UNIFEM and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), UNDP has placed gender specialists and gender advisers in the field in order to strengthen national and regional gender mainstreaming capacity. The Office of the United Nations Coordinator for Human Rights appointed a gender adviser to its office in El Salvador to ensure the integration of gender into the work of the office, and a regional gender focal point, who contributes to the development of the agency's gender mainstreaming strategy, has been appointed to the Habitat Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. UNFPA has strengthened its country support teams by increasing the number of gender, population and development advisers and specialists on socio-cultural research. In addition to collaborating closely with UNDP and UNV in the placement of gender specialists and UNFPA in that of gender, population and development advisers, UNIFEM has placed 10 gender advisers and 11 regional programme advisers. The latter support the resident coordinator system in promoting gender mainstreaming within country programmes, including through chairing United Nations inter-agency thematic groups on gender and participating in other thematic groups.

39. Several entities have established gender units. For example, Habitat established a gender unit in November 1998, which has been carrying out a gender

assessment and developing a gender mainstreaming strategy. This unit also serves as the focus for coordination with staff of regional offices which currently lack gender focal points. An in-house assessment of the first year of the unit's operation took place at the end of 1999. In October 1998, WHO established a department of women's health, the objectives of which include the creation of a coherent and comprehensive policy on women's health issues and the translation of evidence from research into the basis for action. Institutional arrangements for the WHO regional office in the Americas consist of a unit at the regional office, a subregional office for Central America and a network of country-based focal points, while in the South-East Asian office a women's health team has responsibilities for gender mainstreaming and women's health. The remaining four WHO regional offices have regional advisers in women's and reproductive health. At the initiative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, two gender units are being established with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the United Nations Transition Authority in East Timor (UNTAET).

D. Mobilization and allocation of financial resources

40. Responses of several entities suggested clear commitment to increase spending on gender-responsive activities. During 1998-1999, the Women and Habitat programme of Habitat had an operational budget of US$ 734,000, which represented under 0.1 per cent of the Habitat budget for that period. At its seventeenth session, in May 1999, the Commission on Human Settlements requested Habitat to ensure that both the Women and Habitat Programme and the Gender Unit were adequately resourced. ITU indicated that a specific budget allocation of 50,000 Swiss francs had been made for gender issues for 2000-2001, with a further 200,000 Swiss francs being set aside for the Task Force on Gender Issues. UNEP allocated funds for implementation of the gender sub-component of a project on policy, inter-agency and gender during 1998-1999 and reported that it had approved funds for gender-related activities for 2000-2001. ECLAC indicated that expenditure with respect to its Women and Development Unit from January 1997 to June 1999 was US$ 821,844, while additional allocation in terms of human and financial resources to incorporate the gender perspective amounted to $US 843, 615. WMO has approved funds to support a meeting on the participation of women in meteorology, hydrology and related fields for 2000-2001, while inter-agency contributions to UNAIDS for activities incorporating a gender perspective amounted to almost US$ 1 million. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights indicated that additional financial resources had been provided in order to implement the High Commissioner's decision to prioritize the issue of trafficking in persons, with a focus on trafficking in women and children for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

41. Responses of several agencies indicated that the collection of information on expenditures for gender-responsive programmes continues to be a problem within United Nations entities, with several reporting that their activities and projects concerning women and girls are budgeted and implemented within the sectors responsible for their major programmes. Thus UNESCO indicated that during the 1998-1999 biennium, allocation to major programmes was close to US$ 11 million and the proposed sum for the 2000-2001 biennium is over US$ 20 million, with gender-related activities. The World Bank reported that its lending has averaged US$ 490 million during the last three years being directed to reproductive health issues, including STD/AIDS activities. The World Bank has also committed US$ 26 million for the funding of retail micro-finance institutions, regional/global networks and capacity-building initiatives.

42. Systems of financial monitoring, including with regard to gender concerns, have been or are being introduced by several entities. UNICEF's financial and programme monitoring systems currently include specific codes for reporting on gender mainstreaming activities, and budget codes have been designed to reflect gender-related activities, both as primary project activities and components of other projects. UNFPA's budget coding system was revised to facilitate tracing of how gender concerns are addressed in UNFPA's programmes. UNESCO is currently developing a new integrated/programming/budget/monitoring system which will provide capacity for strategic view of activities and their impact and allow programming elements to be defined in terms of activities, description and expected results, performance indicators and qualitative data, thus allowing assessment of the overall budgetary situation with

regard to specific groups, including women. Tasked by IACGWE, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women/Division for the Advancement of Women is conducting a study of budget processes as instruments to mainstream gender equality across the United Nations system.

E. Human resources

43. Efforts have been made to achieve gender balance in staffing. UNDP's gender balance in management policy, adopted in 1998, elaborates a strategy for achieving gender balance in the UNDP workforce, especially in senior management. The second phase of the policy for 1998-2001 establishes targets for recruitment and retention of female staff, and addresses quality of workplace issues, human resources management and accountability. ECLAC strategies to achieve gender balance also include an orientation programme for new staff and gender-sensitivity training for senior staff which covers gender policies and harassment, including sexual harassment. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs has instructed all senior managers to fill posts, particularly at senior levels, with qualified women, while the UNEP gender focal point is involved in the appointment and promotion board process. A representative of the Special Adviser is an ex officio member of the appointment and promotions bodies at United Nations Headquarters. At duty stations away from United Nations Headquarters, where the Office of Adviser on Gender Issues cannot be represented on the local appointment and promotion committee, the departmental focal point for women serves as an ex officio member of the local appointment and promotion committee.

44. At the United Nations, the proportion of women on posts subject to geographical distribution is 38.6 per cent as of 30 November 1999. Activities to increase the proportion of women employed at WIPO, especially in the Professional categories, brought the number of women employed to 30.8 per cent, with six women occupying posts at the D-1 level. UNESCO's July 1999 data indicated that women constitute 40.9 per cent of professional staff and 54.8 per cent of total staff, and currently 47.8 per cent of all professional posts in UNFPA are occupied by women. Since 1 June 1999, 50 per cent of staff at the D-1 level at ECLAC have been women, while for posts subject to geography the percentage of women is just over 33 per cent. The WMO technical commissions and regional bodies have adopted resolutions to encourage the participation of women in their respective fields, and in 1999 the WMO Congress adopted a resolution which requests measures to facilitate the participation of women in all scientific and technical aspects of the work of the organization. WMO has also compiled a list of female experts in meteorology and related fields for the use of WHO and technical commissions, and since 1997 has encouraged applications from female candidates in all announcements of employment. UNU reported that it is taking steps to increase the membership of women in governing bodies and the Rector's ad hoc advisory groups, while its vacancy announcements also encourage women applicants. Steps to encourage women applicants for posts at ECLAC have included dissemination of external vacancy announcements in widely read periodicals and magazines, and through professional networks and institutes of higher learning and the posting of vacancies on the Internet.

45. Several entities drew attention to tools which provide for accountability for gender balance. UNU indicated that its 1998 report noted that the publication of statistics on women staff in the UNU system facilitates monitoring of gender balance. UNEP maintains statistics regarding succession planning in order to facilitate gender equality in personnel practices. Since 1998, ECLAC has produced a monthly report which tracks the achievement of gender parity at the Commission by grade.

46. The most recent available statistics on women at the Professional level and above in the United Nations system prepared by the secretariat of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) are contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (see A/54/405, annex).

F. Coordination

47. As noted in the mid-term review, the coordination of system-wide efforts to implement the Beijing Platform for Action has been facilitated by the establishment of IACWGE, chaired by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and supported by the Division for the Advancement of Women. Responses, including those of ITC and WIPO, emphasized the importance of

IACWGE, the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division for the Advancement of Women in ensuring system-wide coordination and cooperation in this regard.

48. IACWGE undertook follow-up action to ensure implementation of the Economic and Social Council's agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming. At the recommendation of IACWGE, ACC adopted a statement in 1998 on gender equality and mainstreaming in the work of the United Nations system as a follow-up action to those agreed conclusions.

49. IACWGE contributed to the preparation of the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) guidance note for resident coordinators on field-level follow-up to global conferences to ensure systematic and across-the-board attention to gender equality. It held several workshops, including one with resident coordinators and agency field representatives, to strengthen components on gender mainstreaming and the integration of gender equality goals in common country assessments and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process. The workshop adopted a series of recommendations that were forwarded to CCPOQ as input into that Committee's ongoing work on operational activities and to UNDG. In preparation for the special session of the General Assembly on the five-year review of the Platform for Action, ACC held a substantive discussion on the gender aspects of globalization at its second regular session in 1999. An ACC statement to serve as input into the Special Session was prepared, and will be presented to the Preparatory Committee at its third session for the special session.

50. During the reporting period, coordinated efforts significantly enhanced the implementation of the Platform for Action in certain areas. Inter-agency campaigns to eliminate violence against women in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, coordinated by UNIFEM, as well as on inter-agency global video-conference on violence against women, which was held on 8 March 1999, underlined the commitment of all United Nations entities to address violence against women in a holistic manner.

51. Promotion of coordination and collaboration in the follow-up to United Nations world conferences was also facilitated by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Gender Sub-Group, chaired by UNIFEM and the Microcredit Summit of United Nations agencies, co-chaired by UNDP and UNIFEM.

52. Other examples of coordinated activities during the reporting period include UNU's enhanced collaboration with other United Nations research institutes targeted to gender concerns, including UNIFEM and INSTRAW; the training of UNIFEM regional programme advisers for East and South-East Asia and francophone Africa as UNDAF facilitators and their participation as part of an inter-agency global support team on UNDAF missions and the collaboration between UNIFEM; the convening by the League of Arab States and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia of the Second Arab Meeting for Follow-up to the Beijing Conference, which took place at Beirut in 1998. In addition, the Population Division continued to serve as the permanent secretariat for the ACC Subcommittee on Demographic Estimates and Projection, in which capacity it has been active in inter-agency coordination directed at the improvement of gender-specific data.

53. The coordination efforts undertaken by the various task forces of IACWGE, where different United Nations entities took on responsibilities as task managers to improve implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy, for example, on documenting good practices, developing indicators for monitoring, influencing budgetary processes and establishing an inventory of training resources, is another example of effective inter-agency collaboration.

54. It was noted that despite current coordination efforts, further mechanisms for inter-agency coordination with regard to gender issues were required. For example, ECLAC noted that it organizes on a yearly basis regional meetings of specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system on the advancement of women. During three meetings held in 1997 to 1999 to assess the measures taken within each organization to mainstream the gender perspective into their activities, the need for greater coordination and to facilitate follow-up of agreements adopted by countries was stressed. An analysis of factors that support or inhibit coordination on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment is being prepared by UNIFEM, whose East African regional office commissioned a study on coordination among United Nations agencies on gender issues in 1997.

G. Obstacles

55. Responses highlighted a number of obstacles to the implementation of the Platform for Action and the system-wide medium-term plan, including the persistence of gaps between global concepts and their translation into practical, country-level strategies to achieve equality between women and men. The need for practical measures for gender mainstreaming at all stages of programming was emphasized, as were consistent commitment to and compliance with the gender mainstreaming strategy and effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

56. Among constraints identified were lack of understanding of gender as a concept or the failure to perceive issues, such as poverty, the environment or HIV/AIDS, as having gender dimensions. Lack of staff capacity to implement gender mainstreaming strategies or carry out gender analysis were also highlighted, as were inadequately defined management competencies for gender mainstreaming, absence of strategic planning and channels of communication. Lack of staff confidence in their capacities to incorporate gender concerns was also categorized as an obstacle.

57. Challenges are also posed by social and traditional environments that might be hostile to notions of women's equality with men, as well as lack of institutional support and political commitment from donor agencies and Governments, which result in failure to develop concrete action programmes to advance women's equality with men, or development of targeted goals that could be evaluated and monitored at intervals. Challenges also exist as a result of weak national capacities in areas which include gathering data disaggregated by sex and other research information. Poverty, the negative impact of globalization and the persistence of stereotypical attitudes towards the role of women and girls were identified as presenting particular challenges, while the lack of integration between economic and social policies remains an important obstacle to implementation.

Annex

Information on implementation in the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action, as supplied by responding United Nations entities

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1. Activities undertaken by entities that have reported on their implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women (1996-2001) are set out below. In presenting the information, the headings employed by the plan — "Information collection and database development", "Research and analysis", "Operational activities, including advisory services, technical assistance and training" and "Public information and outreach" — have been used, although as in the mid-term review the first two headings have been combined. The detailed responses provided by entities are available on request from the Division for the Advancement of Women.

I. Women and poverty

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

2. Recognizing that current information on gender-based constraints and opportunities for rural populations is critical for informed policy and programme decisions, FAO pursued initiatives to improve the collection, tabulation, dissemination and use of data disaggregated by sex. Guidelines, training materials and reviews of methodologies have been prepared on gender aspects in agricultural survey design and procedures for data collection. FAO also organized a technical seminar on gender and related statistics in agricultural and rural development during 1999. The World Bank has created a new database, "Genderstats", providing on-line access to key sex-disaggregated socio-economic data, while its *World Development Indicators* has expanded its coverage of gender indicators.

3. In 1997, case studies on five African countries addressing the issue of women's access to land and agricultural inputs were prepared by the African Centre for Women of ECA. In collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and FARMESA, FAO carried out a study in Burkina Faso, Senegal, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe to identify opportunities and constraints women farmers face and improve production tools. FAO has undertaken in-depth analysis in 10 countries of the sociocultural and gender imbalances related to farming plots and natural resources, which revealed that limited access to credit and extension services are factors which contribute to gender equality. ECLAC submitted a paper on sustainable development, poverty and gender at the Seventh Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) completed a study, containing socio-economic data disaggregated by sex, on the relationship between reproductive health and poverty in the region.

4. Studies prepared by the ILO included an analysis of the impact of microfinance interventions aiming to establish poverty yardsticks and impact methodologies to contribute to mainstreaming gender into microfinance, a detailed evaluation of the integrated Self-Employed Women Association (SEWA) social insurance and a paper on the access of women in the informal sector to microfinance services.

5. In the light of the linkage of women's poverty to denial of land and housing rights, Habitat research has incorporated property rights, and has included an analysis of research and action on women's property rights in East Africa and the documentation of best practices on access to land and secure tenure.

6. Research on the impact of the Asian economic crisis on women has been undertaken by UNIFEM, which has also created an information briefing kit to assist policymakers, development agencies, trade unions and others to understand and address the threat of crisis on women's lives. UNIFEM has also sought to improve statistical data relating to particular categories of women workers, including home-based workers and street vendors. A subregional programme in Mexico and Central America supported by UNIFEM involves the participation of national statistics officers and women's organizations in the elaboration of social and economic indicators on the situation of women.

Operational activities, including advisory services, technical assistance and training

7. During the reporting period, ESCAP initiated a project entitled "Empowering women in poverty", which built on its 1997 project entitled "Improving the status of women in poverty", with the objective of formulating economic and social policies, including devising social safety nets and economic empowerment schemes to address the issue of feminization of poverty. The project, which included a regional seminar in 1999, and was conducted in cooperation with the Grameen Bank, resulted in the development of an employment promotion methodology, using local

villages with successful enterprises to train unemployed women in the same or nearby communities and to assist unemployed women with no income-earning skills in acquiring such skills. ESCAP has sought to strengthen income-generating opportunities for women in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

8. As in the last reporting period, FAO continued in its efforts to increase rural women's access to productive resources and materials, developing and implementing a strategy in training women farmers as trainers in modern rice production technologies with a view to reducing the effort and time required by women to produce rice under rain-fed conditions. An expert consultation on women and technology transfer was organized by the FAO regional office for Asia and the Pacific in November 1998, which sought to explore achievements and constraints in respect of technology transfer to Asian women and identify innovative and successful practices with a view to their replication. Recommendations were made to improve rural women's access to technology through innovative methods, including distance learning.

9. Interventions to increase the participation of women in informal sector employment and improve the income and working conditions of poor rural women which were initiated by the ILO included vocational and skills training, credit and savings schemes and the identification of viable income-generating activities for women. The ILO also elaborated a capacity-building programme on gender, poverty and employment, focusing on the three objectives of enhancing women's access to quality employment opportunities; strengthening their bargaining and negotiating power; and providing innovative strategies for social protection for less organized workers and those in the informal sector, including home workers. Poverty alleviation projects executed by UNIFEM have included a project in Burkina Faso which trained over 300 women in improved production techniques for shea butter, which provided women with a wide market and the opportunity to negotiate large orders.

10. UNFPA has combined its activities in Bangladesh, Brazil, El Salvador, India, Madagascar, Morocco, Paraguay and the Sudan to ensure access to reproductive health services and nutrition with provision of information on microfinancing, while it has set up revolving funds in several countries to increase rural women's access to credit for production. UNFPA has also sought to support women's economic empowerment through income generating activities by means of skills building and training, with one of its projects in China providing income-generating activities, training in production and business skills and functional literacy. UNICEF has also sought to improve knowledge, skills and access to and control of resources by poorer women through microcredit activities. In cooperation with the All China Women's Association, UNICEF has trained 274 provincial trainers and 7,449 country cadres in China, with the result that 1,160 poor women received microcredit. UNICEF support to existing projects in Nepal and Viet Nam has facilitated wide access for women to credit. UNICEF's review of its microcredit scheme in Egypt indicated that the scheme was able to reach the poorest of the poor, that the health and educational status of borrowers' children improved and that they depended less on child labour and charity for income.

11. Several entities reported on their support for NGO networks directed to the alleviation of women's poverty. For example, Habitat highlighted the support it had provided to the Habitat International Coalition Women and Shelter Network, which addresses women's property rights. Since 1997, UNFPA has supported the participation of women from developing countries in the Microcredit Summit Meeting of Councils (1997, 1998, 1999) where microcredit practitioners develop action plans and share experiences on strategies to provide credit for self-employment and empowerment for the world's poorest women.

Public information and outreach

12. The Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat has initiated and completed more than 18 activities on the theme of women and poverty with a view to increasing awareness of the gender dimensions of poverty and public policy, including two segments of "UN in action" produced by UN Television, which is distributed to 960 broadcasters in 116 countries, concerned with United Nations assistance to agricultural cooperatives in Botswana and provision by UNDP of microcredit to poor women in Yemen. Women and poverty featured as a segment of the United Nations radio programme "Women", while United Nations information centres (UNICs) in several countries organized workshops, conferences and exhibits of gender and poverty issues. For example, the

UNIC at Asunción organized a workshop for rural women and the UNIC at Algiers hosted an exhibit and conference on rural women's agricultural products, which was covered by Algerian television and radio. A television programme concerning women and poverty produced by the UNIC at Ouagadougou in collaboration with the UNDP country office was broadcast by Télévision nationale du Burkina, while the ILO developed a package on gender, poverty and employment which is being adapted to African, Latin American and Western Asian contexts.

13. FAO has also continued raising awareness of issues concerning rural women. World Food Day 1998 and TeleFood 1998 highlighted the contribution of women to global food security. In addition to significant conventional public information and outreach efforts relating to gender and agricultural development, on 8 March 1999 FAO launched a web site on gender and food security (http://www.fao.org/gender). Habitat has sought to highlight the importance of women's land rights through print media and posters, while UNDP has continued to publish its monograph series which addresses gender, poverty and good governance.

II. Education and training of women

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

14. In its continued implementation of the Platform for Action and the recommendations of IACWGE with respect to the collection of statistics disaggregated by sex, the United States Statistics Division has been preparing, with the support of UNFPA, version 4 of the Women's Indicators and Statistics Database (Wistat), which incorporates comprehensive data on the education of women and girls. Wistat, version 4, provides the basis for the *World's Women 2000*, which will highlight this area. The World Bank has also created a database, "EDSTATS", which provides a range of country level data relevant to the education of girls. In addition to providing basic sex-disaggregated data in its annual *World Report on Education*, UNESCO has also published guidelines in English and French on gender-neutral language in order to eradicate gender-biased language in all policy and operational activities.

Operational activities

15. Projects to encourage the enrolment of girls in school as well as to promote skill-building and income-generating activities and access to reproductive health services and information were supported by UNFPA, which also supported a programme for continuing education for young mothers, which included counselling, daycare and skills-building elements. UNICEF's global girls' education programme contributed to an increase in girls' school enrolment and the reduction of drop-out rates, including as a result of a project to provide primary education for ethnic minority girls in a remote rural area of Viet Nam. Projects within the programme also led to an increase in the number of female teachers in Africa and Asia, and included teacher training to increase gender-awareness among teachers. The World Bank continued 32 lending programmes relating to girls' education, while several projects with components on girls' education are now being prepared.

16. The ILO also implemented several projects to improve women's access to vocational training, including a regional programme in Latin America to strengthening technical and vocational training for low-income women.

17. Projects aimed at strengthening post-literacy development programmes for women have been initiated by ESCAP, while as part of its strategy to enhance capacity for African women entrepreneurs, the African Centre for Women organized a study tour of India and Sri Lanka which focused on food processing technologies. ESCAP activities in this context included the completion of a project on technology exchange for food processing and the creation of a database on grass-roots organizations, which provided practical training in low cost and appropriate technologies in the food processing sector for over 130 women and men.

18. Activities undertaken by the Department of Public Information in this critical area included preparation of articles and videos, as well as the convening of workshops and seminars, while the ILO *World Employment Report 1998-99* devoted a chapter to women and training in the global economy.

III. Women and health

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

19. New series of sex-specific estimates and projections of mortality and related indicators were developed and published by the United Nations Population Division during 1999, including in the publication *Charting the Progress of Populations*. In addition, the 1998 revision of the population estimates and projections included additional data sets on women's health, particularly life expectancy at birth and total fertility rates for the period 1950-2050, including the impact of HIV/AIDS. The work of the Population Division, in particular in the context of the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), also included analytical studies emphasizing women and health, especially reproductive rights and health. Version 4 of the Women's Indicators and Statistics Database (Wistat), which is being prepared by the Statistics Division, includes statistics on female genital mutilation and AIDS. During the last biennium, ECLAC has restructured its database, which covers the main economic and social areas, to integrate a gender perspective, while the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) has sought to incorporate the gender perspective into its regular research activities on population and development, including through a study on the relationship of poverty and reproductive health in Latin America and the Caribbean. ECLAC also prepared four studies on aspects of women's health with regard to various countries in the region.

20. Information collection and research with regard to the gender perspectives of HIV/AIDS have been undertaken under the auspices of UNAIDS, which has also initiated a pilot programme with UNFPA and UNIFEM in the Bahamas, India, Mexico, Senegal, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe on gender concerns and HIV, incorporating research and training components.

21. Databases on different aspects of reproductive health, tuberculosis and epidemiological information are maintained by WHO and are being reviewed for gender differences, and a system for collecting data on women, health and development issues is being established by the WHO Regional Office for Africa, while the Regional Information System on Women's Health of the WHO Regional Office for the Americas is currently mounting web pages on gender issues, including gender and health-sector reform, gender and tobacco and gender and reproductive health. WHO has also collaborated with countries of the South-East Asian region to complete women's health and development country profiles, which provide an analysis of women's health and development issues based on quantitative and qualitative information and propose recommendations for action. The World Bank has developed a web site on safe motherhood which provides information for practitioners.

Operational activities

22. Operational activities in this area have included projects concerning female genital mutilation, reproductive health, safe motherhood and HIV/AIDS. WHO has sought to generate knowledge and test interventions aimed at the elimination of female genital mutilation, as well as to improve management of its health consequences. UNIFEM has assisted in the introduction of alternative rites of passage for young women in Kenya which has resulted in reduction of female genital mutilation as well as a sense of empowerment and self-confidence for the young women involved.

23. The Population Division has provided technical advice and assistance to country projects supported by UNFPA dealing with reproductive health issues, while it has also assisted ESCAP in evaluation of its family planning programmes. WHO activities have been directed at the elimination of maternal mortality, including the low status of women, discrimination against the girl child and early marriage, which lead to high risk pregnancies. The World Bank provided assistance to over 100 projects in more than 70 countries with women's health components, with the majority of lending focused on reproductive health, including family planning, maternal health and STD/AIDS control. For example, in Indonesia the World Bank has supported the deployment of 50,000 midwives, thereby improving the technical skills of hospital staff to manage obstetric emergencies. ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean collaborated on several projects relating to the integration of population into development planning and the conduct of surveys on teenage fertility and the analysis of data, as well as the preparation of policy-related strategies and the conduct of workshops for analysis of the surveys. Reproductive health for women has remained the focus of UNFPA activities, with over

60 per cent of its funding aiming to improve the access and availability of quality services that meet the reproductive and sexual needs of populations, particularly women. Work in this context included that aimed at increasing reproductive health information services for women, training to service providers and standardizing protocols and guidelines and providing contraceptives and basic medical equipment, with emphasis on building national capacity in these areas. UNFPA has also collaborated with WHO on a project to improve collaboration between Governments and NGOs to accelerate the implementation of the conclusions of the Cairo and Beijing conferences with regard to sexual and reproductive health from a gender equality perspective.

24. Safe motherhood initiatives have included the joint publication in 1997 by UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO of guidelines for monitoring the availability and use of obstetric services, as well as the production of a safe motherhood guide, which was distributed to UNICEF field officers. UNICEF has also advocated the creation of mother/women-friendly societies which create conditions conducive to safe motherhood, as well as the development of projects in Bangladesh, Peru and the United Republic of Tanzania directed at the reduction of maternal mortality.

25. Through IACWGE, UNAIDS and its co-sponsors have supported a number of initiatives on gender and HIV. These have included a project, in collaboration with UNDP, to strengthen community responses to HIV/AIDS undertaken as a pilot programme in India, which incorporates gender and AIDS into the work of national partners, as well as a project entitled "Positive women and voices and choices", under which HIV-positive women are conducting research into the impact of HIV/AIDS on their reproductive health and rights. In collaboration with the African Centre for Women, UNAIDS has supported economic empowerment activities for women in the context of the pandemic, and has collaborated with UNESCO on a project to reduce the rate of HIV transmission among women through such activities as awareness-raising workshops in Africa. UNAIDS has also worked to promote the development of a microbicide to reduce women's susceptibilities to the virus. UNFPA has also supported HIV/AIDS prevention activities in over 131 countries, with 22 of such activities specifically targeting women. Projects in 1998 included projects in Colombia and Uganda to support women living with HIV/AIDS and drop-in clinics in the Philippines for female sex-workers. UNICEF activities in the context of HIV/AIDS addresses women and adolescents and mother to child transmission, with life skills and peer education, as well as counselling and testing of young people being a growing emphasis. Efforts have been made in Cambodia by UNICEF to introduce life skills for AIDS prevention in the formal curriculum through the training of curricula developers and the sensitization of primary and secondary school teachers. UNIFEM's global initiative on gender-focused responses to address the challenges of HIV/AIDS commenced in 1998. This project aims to strengthen the capacity of women's organizations to address the pandemic and to increase the knowledge of UNIFEM, Governments and others with respect to the experience of women living with the virus. In an effort to increase its capacity in this regard, a UNAIDS adviser was placed in UNIFEM.

26. Several of WHO operational activities have concerned disease prevention for women. Its Task Force on Gender Sensitive Interventions on Tropical Diseases has evaluated the impact of gender components on specific aspects of disease prevention and control, and has supported the implementation and assessment of a gender-sensitive strategy with a view to establishing a set of strategies and activities incorporating gender concerns which can be tested in other contexts. A review of prevalence and incidence of major tropical diseases by sex has also been conducted, and a global strategy for the prevention of non-communicable diseases that affect women as frequently as men is being finalized. In addition, WHO is developing a global strategy for the management of osteoporosis, including practical guidelines. WHO activities to confront tobacco and substance abuse have also included a strong emphasis on women and girls.

27. Examples of Department of Public Information activities concerning women and health have included the production of radio and television programmes on female genital mutilation, as well as programmes concerning the reproductive health of refugees and the reduction of maternal mortality.

28. Information dissemination and outreach with regard to HIV/AIDS has been undertaken by UNAIDS in various forums, including the forty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 1999 and the special session of the General Assembly on the five-year review of ICPD. Several statements by and

interviews of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights have also sought to raise awareness in this context. UNICEF also supports information dissemination activities in relation to health, particularly with regard to HIV/AIDS and female genital mutilation. A series of meetings organized by WHO concerning reproductive health research and services have resulted in the dissemination of eight reports on those issues, the most recent entitled "Women's needs and gender perspectives in reproductive health in the Eastern Mediterranean region". Other outreach activities of the WHO have included the production of an advocacy kit on the concept of reproductive health, with special emphasis on safe motherhood, 3,000 copies of which have been distributed; the dedication of 1998 World Health Day to pregnancy and safe motherhood; and the publication of the *Regional Health Report 1998: Focus on Women* to raise awareness of the status of women's health in South-East Asia. In addition, a major component of WHO's 1999 World No Tobacco Day was on smoking prevalence among young and middle-aged women.

IV. Violence against women

Information, collection, database development, research and analysis

29. Version 4 of the Women's Indicators and Statistics Database (Wistat), which is being prepared by the Statistics Division and will be available on CD-ROM at the end of 1999, will include data on violence against women. Wistat, version 4, provides the basis for the *World's Women 2000*, which is being prepared under the direction of the Statistics Division and which will highlight violence against women, including female genital mutilation. A system for collecting data on gender issues, including violence against women, sexual abuse, rape and incest, and such harmful traditional practices as female genital mutilation, is being established by the WHO Regional Office for Africa, while the Regional Information System on Women's Health, developed by the WHO Regional Office for the Americas is currently mounting web pages on gender-based violence which will include all publications and tools generated by two subregional domestic violence prevention projects.

30. WHO has implemented a multi-country study on the prevalence, health consequences, risks and protective factors for violence against women. The study entails a cross-sectional survey of 3,000 women in six to eight countries, supplemented by qualitative research involving women and men. ECLAC has sought to address the dearth of official data on violence against women in almost every country of the region by preparing studies on the issue, which have included a study on violence within couples which was presented to the ECLAC's Seventh Regional Conference. Habitat has developed a paper on violence against women in urban areas. The second phase of a UNICEF study on domestic violence, focusing on abusers and assessing programme interventions, was completed in 1998 and will be disseminated to guide programme activities on community-based interventions to combat violence against women.

31. Research on harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation, has been the focus of the work of several entities, with research in this context being one of the priorities of WHO, which is currently developing a regional research and development programme with regard to six sub-Saharan countries to identify best practices for preventing and eliminating female genital mutilation. With the support of UNICEF, comprehensive information has been gathered with respect to harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation in Ethiopia. UNICEF also provided financial and technical support for a national survey of harmful traditional practices in Nigeria, and will support a baseline survey to be carried out in the Sudan which will establish a database on the prevalence, type and attitudes to female genital mutilation. Research into the incidence of and patterns in respect of trafficking in women and children has been supported by several United Nations entities, including UNICEF, which has supported a study in Costa Rica which analyses the path that boys, girls and adolescents follow leading to prostitution. The Division for the Advancement of Women, in collaboration with a non-governmental organization, completed work on the regional studies on the impact of measures to address domestic violence against women which had been supported by funds granted by the UNIFEM Trust Fund on Violence against Women.

32. Operational activities in regard to violence against women have included workshops and training for relevant sectors, such as the police, advocacy for law and policy reform, and the provision of counselling and reproductive services and skills building for

victims of violence. UNIFEM's Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women has approved 87 projects since 1996. During the most recent cycle, 15 projects were approved concerning domestic violence, female genital mutilation, trafficking in women and femicide. In addition, UNIFEM supported other projects, including a training curriculum for the Police Training Institute at New Delhi. UNICEF promoted training workshops for judges, public prosecutors, police and lawyers in Bolivia following the approval of Law 1674 against intra-family violence. Awareness-raising workshops for teachers and students and seminars to explain the law which were attended by women leaders and public authority personnel were also held. UNICEF advocacy programmes in the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand were also directed at violence against women and children. Large numbers of doctors, teachers, police, judges, social workers, city administrators, local government executives and programme implementers were reached by UNICEF's various programmes in those countries. A project to address the needs of women and girls affected by violence was set up by WHO in 1997. Components of the project include the training of health workers, the establishment of a local network of health and counselling assistance for women affected by violence. Projects relating to violence against women have also been established by WHO in 10 Latin American countries, Tunisia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

33. Specific forms of violence against women, including trafficking, have also been initiated. For example, ESCAP, in collaboration with the ILO, the International Migration Organization, the Asian Women's Fund and the National Commission on Women's Affairs of Thailand, organized a conference on trafficking in women at Bangkok on 3 and 4 November 1998, at which the Bangkok Accord and Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Women, representing regional consensus on activities needed at national, subregional and regional levels to confront trafficking in women, was adopted. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has also prioritized measures to address trafficking in women and children through enhancement of support for human rights mechanisms which concern trafficking and related issues and the adoption of a specific anti-trafficking programme, the objective of which is to integrate human rights into international, regional and national initiatives to eradicate trafficking. The operational activities of the Office in this regard include a joint project with the Council of Europe to prevent trafficking in Central and Eastern Europe, a range of activities in former Yugoslavia coordinated by its office at Sarajevo and a joint project with UNDP Nepal on legal and judicial measures to control trafficking.

34. Projects to address trafficking have also been adopted by UNICEF in its follow-up to the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children held at Stockholm in 1996, including the support of vocational training for girls in risk situations in Pernambuco state, Paraíba and São Paolo, Brazil, and the Youth Career Development Programme established in collaboration with Thai private-sector hotels, NGOs and government institutions, which facilitates access to skills training and employment opportunities for girls and young women at risk of sexual exploitation. UNICEF has also concluded a plan of action with the Nepal police, which incorporates training components for police and support for the establishment of a special women's police desk. UNICEF also supports training of women's groups, as well as their formation into groups to prevent trafficking in women and children.

35. In regard to female genital mutilation, activities of the Office have included the preparation of two regional seminars and support to human rights mechanisms whose mandates concern this practice. UNFPA supported interventions to prevent female genital mutilation, including a project created by the Sabini Elders in Uganda which promotes ceremonies that mark the passage of girls to adulthood with dancing and gift-giving but without cutting, and stresses that practices can be changed without the compromise of cultural values. This project won the 1998 Population Award. UNICEF activities have included advocacy and support for legislation to prohibit female genital mutilation and mobilization of front-line workers and women's groups in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda, which has led to locally developed strategies to eliminate female genital mutilation. UNICEF has also provided a credit fund for practitioners of circumcision at Addis Ababa in order to support alternative income-generation activities.

Public outreach and information and dissemination

36. The Department of Public Information has carried out numerous awareness-raising activities to highlight the issue of violence against women, including a video and poster contest organized by the Buenos Aires UNIC and a march on the theme of stopping rape organized by the UNIC at Maseru, Lesotho. The Department of Public Information and its field offices collaborated in the organization of an inter-agency global video-conference on 8 March 1999 (see main report, para. 50). A programme on violence against women organized by the ECA Inter-Agency Working Group on Gender in collaboration with the Women's Affairs Office of Ethiopia was also held on 8 March 1999. Regional inter-agency campaigns on violence against women continued or were launched in several regions, including Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and South Asia and the Pacific. In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNICEF is preparing a press kit on violence against women and girls.

37. Other public outreach initiatives included workshops, including two organized by UNICEF at Kathmandu during 1997 and 1998, as well as public hearings on violence against women and children, including incest, domestic violence and rape, and the production of video dramas and television spots in Namibia. UNIFEM supported a public hearing during which women gave personal hearings on their experiences of violence. Specific initiatives developed by UNICEF to address female genital mutilation have included a campaign directed at behavioural change for Egypt, and seminars and workshops for Ethiopia, Nigeria and the Sudan.

38. Information and advocacy activities with regard to trafficking in women and children have included the support of regional and country seminars and surveys on these issues. For example, UNICEF has supported regional seminars on trafficking in women in Thailand and a national survey which was carried out in Costa Rica on child labour and sexual exploitation. UNICEF used the visit of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography to Mexico as the focus of an innovative awareness-raising campaign, and invited public and private institutions as well as NGOs to comment on her report and propose alternative strategies to those she had put forward. This campaign led to the creation of a national commission, and plan of action to prevent, attend and eradicate the commercial sexual exploitation of children, which itself formed the basis of a seminar in 1999, leading to wide awareness of the issue among government bodies, the private sector and NGOs.

V. Women and armed conflict

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

39. A research project is being carried out under the auspices of Habitat on the effect of statutory and customary land tenure and property laws on women in situations of armed conflict and reconstruction. UNU and INSTRAW are collaborating in a research project to design a model women's network with enhanced conflict resolution capacity, and in partnership with Carleton University, Canada, a major research project on conflict prevention was initiated in late 1999. Projected UNU research plans include a project on women and children in post-conflict peace-building, while during 1999 the ILO published gender guidelines for employment and skills training in conflict affected countries which addresses the need for reconstruction and peace-building. An issue of *Women2000* on the United Nations response to sexual violence in armed conflict was published by the Division for the Advancement of Women in 1998. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in collaboration with the Division for the Advancement of Women, is preparing an in-depth study on the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in multidimensional peacekeeping operations.

Operational activities

40. Entities' operational activities in this critical area have emphasized the importance of integration of the gender perspective into conflict issues, humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction. The Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) Sub-working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance met four times during 1998 to produce a background paper and policy statement on gender and humanitarian assistance. In July 1999, an inter-agency workshop was held, with representatives of country teams from Angola, Tajikistan and the Democratic Republic of Korea, on the subject of the integration of gender into needs assessment and planning of humanitarian assistance. The workshop resulted in the development

of a needs and impact assessment framework, including a gender-sensitive checklist and guidelines. In conjunction with the IASC Gender Sub-working Group, UNICEF and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs co-sponsored a review of existing training materials within the United Nations system dealing with gender and humanitarian issues, and as a result of this review a resource package of appropriate materials is currently being developed and will be made available electronically through the Office web site in 2000. UNICEF also developed training materials relevant to conflict situations, including on the rights of the child from a gender perspective for peacekeeping forces, and provided gender-sensitive training for staff and others on gender concerns in complex emergencies.

41. The importance of greater involvement of women in peace efforts and democratic governance has been stressed by UNESCO through its emphasis on women's contribution to a culture of peace, including through a series of workshops held in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. Training workshops to strengthen the capacity of women's peace movements in Burundi have been initiated by UNIFEM, which has also supported a South Asian initiative to bring together NGOs from across the region to develop work plans on women and peace. During 1998, UNIFEM, UNDP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights supported a conference at Baku, Azerbaijan, on women in conflicts. UNICEF has sought to ensure greater participation of women in administration of refugee camps in Lebanon through workshops and seminars, including on management skills training and the establishment of a soft loan scheme administered jointly by women's associations and popular committees which formulate local camp policy. UNICEF and UNIFEM are building on training workshops for Somali women aimed at creating a critical mass of women able to advocate for peace by initiating a joint project in Somalia to promote women's participation in civil governance. An interregional consultation on women's land and property rights in situations of conflict and reconstruction organized by UNIFEM, Habitat, UNHCR and UNDP, was held at Kigali in 1998. The outcome of the meeting, a declaration of commitments, was submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session, in 1998.

42. Projects to ensure provision of reproductive health care for women in conflict and other emergency situations have been implemented by UNFPA, including in Afghanistan and the Congo and through the provision of reproductive health packages for refugees from Kosovo. Together with UNHCR and ICRC, UNFPA supports a project in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa which provides comprehensive reproductive health care to displaced women and counselling for women and girls who have been sexually abused.

Public outreach and information dissemination

43. Radio and television programmes on the situation of women in armed conflict, refugee and internally displaced women and the projected impact of the International Criminal Court on women were produced by the Department of Public Information. Conferences and seminars were organized by several entities, including ECA, which, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies and programmes coordinated a seminar on best practices of women in peace-building and non-violent conflict resolution. The slogan "No homes without peace, no peace without homes" has been used by several agencies, including Habitat, to stress the issue of women's property rights in conflict situations. In Colombia, during 1998, UNIFEM provided support for a march for peace which resulted in the establishment of a truth forum.

VI. Women and the economy

Information collection, database development, research and development

44. Collection of statistics and data on work and other issues, including migration by several entities routinely integrates the gender perspective. Thus, the United Nations Statistics Division has sought to implement the recommendations of the Platform for Action relating to measurement of work, including paid and unpaid work and in the informal economy through projects carried out with a number of collaborators including UNDP, the ILO and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO), a worldwide coalition of individuals from grass-roots organizations, academic institutions and international development agencies. UNDP has continued to develop sex-disaggregated statistics, especially in the context of labour markets, national accounting, unremunerated

labour and time-use analysis on paid and unpaid work, including such statistics in the *Human Development Report* and using these as the basis of the GEM index. The United Nations Population Division has incorporated gender-specific data into a statistical database in international migration, and currently incorporates gender issues, including women's employment, into its research and analysis of international migration and demographic trends. The expanded list of key indicators of labour market performance including new employment trends being developed by the ILO, include 14 indicators disaggregated by sex.

45. Research on economic issues has been informed by gender analysis, while studies on specific issues on women and the economy have also been produced. In 1998, ESCAP published a study entitled "A demographic perspective on women in development in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam". The Division for the Advancement of Women, with contributions from several entities of the United Nations system (ILO, UNCTAD, FAO, World Bank, INSTRAW, UNDP, UNIDO, UNIFEM, UNESCO, UNFPA and the regional commissions), prepared the *1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development: Globalization, Gender and Work*. Issues in economic development which have particular implications for rural women have been included in the annual FAO publication *The State of Food and Agriculture*, and analysis of 10 countries in terms of the sociocultural and gender imbalances related to farming plots and natural resources has also been undertaken by FAO. Studies on the impact of the financial crisis incorporating gender analysis in Indonesia, Thailand and the Republic of Korea have been completed by the ILO, which has also undertaken research into employment policies affecting older women workers and women workers in export processing zones, as well as an action-oriented research programme on homeworkers. UNIFEM sponsored a study on gender and trade in Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu, as well as research on the impact of trade liberalization on women workers in the textiles and agricultural sectors of Mexico. UNIFEM also initiated a project in the Asia and Pacific region to ensure that gender was reflected in the 1998 Pakistan census so that women's participation in and contribution to the national economy was reflected accurately for the purposes of resource allocation and policy formulation. Research is being undertaken by UNU on technology and women's empowerment in sub-Saharan Africa, and it has completed research projects on teleworking and sustainable development in India and Malaysia.

Operational activities

46. Activities to enhance women's technical and entrepreneurial skills and opportunities for remunerated employment and income generation have been undertaken by several entities. An FAO pilot project carried out in India, Mexico and Mozambique sought to initiate collective action in collaboration with local institutions to enable individuals in households to increase their incomes, and FAO is coordinating a project in the southern African region which aims to enhance the understanding of women and men food producers and those working with them at the community level of local knowledge systems.

47. The World Bank has sought to facilitate the integration of gender issues in economic and social projects and programmes through a number of lending programmes. In its capacity as Chair of the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor and in partnership with other donors, the Bank has sought to address women's access to financial services through funding for microfinance institutions, the clientele of which is predominantly female.

48. National action plans were formulated in several countries under the ILO's more and better jobs for women programme, and tripartite commissions on gender equality in the world of work were set up in five countries. In Central America, a subregional project on organizing women workers in export-processing zones was initiated by the ILO in late 1998. UNCTAD has executed a project on the follow-up to measures adopted by major conferences with respect to Least Developed Countries which aim to create opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

49. Conferences, seminars and workshops were convened or supported by several entities. The ILO organized training and awareness seminars for its tripartite constituents which have been directed at improving working conditions and industrial relations for women workers. It also was instrumental in the Côte d'Ivoire national policy workshop on employment, gender and economic reform held in November 1998, which led to the adoption of an action plan to be used by government ministries in the preparation of central planning/budgetary documents.

The ECA African Centre for Women organized an international conference on African women and economic development to coincide with the fortieth anniversary of ECA in 1998. ESCAP organized a regional meeting on the impact of globalization on women at Bangkok in June 1998, while a subregional workshop organized by ESCAP in October 1998 in Viet Nam adopted the Ho Chi Minh plan of action for promoting women in small businesses. In preparation for the tenth session of UNCTAD, to be held in February 2000, UNCTAD convened an expert workshop on trade, sustainable development and gender in July 1999. Agreed conclusions and recommendations on globalization, trade-related issues and gender-specific problems of least developed countries were reached by the 96 experts drawn from States members of UNCTAD, entities of the United Nations system and NGOs. UNIFEM provided technical assistance to the African Intergovernmental Authority on Development for a trade harmonization workshop for women in business from Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and the Sudan, and assisted in the organization of a workshop in South Africa on gender-sensitive budgets.

Public outreach and information dissemination

50. Activities to increase awareness of the economic position of women, the importance of their economic empowerment and the impact of economic policies on them undertaken within the system included the production by the Department of Public Information of radio and television programmes on such topics as the negative impact of structural adjustment policies on women in New Zealand and globalization and opportunities for women in West Africa. The Santiago UNIC also launched a media campaign on the economic integration of women in the labour force in Latin America.

VII. Women in power and decision-making

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

51. A web site on African women was established with the support of UNIFEM's regional programme for women's regional political leadership. A set of indicators on women's participation and leadership was designed by ECLAC and a questionnaire elaborated, thereby enabling the collection of recent information on women's political participation in 30 Latin American and Caribbean countries. ECLAC prepared a position paper on gender equity issues in access to power and participation for the Seventh Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean held during November 1997. The Division for the Advancement of Women continued to update and widely disseminate its database on women in government.

Operational activities

52. Projects, including workshops, to increase the participation of women in decision-making in various sectors were implemented by the United Nations during the reporting period. UNDP has sought to facilitate women's access to and influence on governance structures, conflict management and political decision-making through political literacy and leadership training, the enhancement of political negotiation skills and networking, especially among women politicians, both subregionally and regionally. Workshops and training activities to sensitize parliamentarians and other officials have been organized by UNIFEM in Kenya and the Pacific, as a result of which more women ran for political office in Kiribati and Vanuatu. UNESCO efforts have been directed towards increasing the number of women parliamentarians, particularly through its cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, while UNFPA has supported a meeting of African women ministers in 1998. In collaboration with the Council of Women World Leaders, the World Bank linked women in key government financial and economic positions to discuss globalization and financial governance. In 1999, the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women collaborated with the Council of Women World Leaders to convene a meeting of women Ministers of Justice at United Nations Headquarters. FAO organized a workshop on gender and participation in agricultural planning which evaluated experiences in gender-sensitive participatory rural appraisal, and sought to ensure women a voice in cultures where men dominate decision-making. A gender-responsive participatory agricultural planning package based on the outcome of the workshop has been developed. The ILO women in management in

Africa programme sought to provide women with adequate skills for becoming efficient managers, including through promoting union organization of women, while application of the Habitat programme manual on women's empowerment, which trains teams of residents of urban informal settlements in data collection and analysis, has been applied in 13 countries in four regions and has resulted in an increase in women's role in decision-making. UNICEF activities in that regard have been in the area of training, with training in women's and children's rights and gender provided to village council members in Uganda in order to build the capacity of women members and women members of Indian *panchayats* being provided with training and other support.

53. Several projects to be implemented in the next biennium were developed during the reporting period, including an ECA proposal for a women leaders training institute.

Public outreach and information dissemination

54. Department of Public Information activities in this area included radio and television programmes, for example on succeeding as a woman politician in Africa, and workshops and media-outreach strategies designed to raise public awareness on the importance of increasing women's participation in political and decision-making processes. Habitat organized a number of activities which included a workshop on the general elections and their impact on women at the Antananarivo UNIC.

VIII. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

55. Twice yearly, the Division of the Advancement of Women updated its global directory of national machineries for the advancement of women and distributed it to Governments and other actors. Similarly, ECLAC updated the directory of national organizations dealing with programmes and policies on women in Latin America and the Caribbean, providing information on the location of each organization in the state structure, its legal mandate, financial and technical resources, as well as its main functions and activities. UNU has prepared a directory of African women professionals involved in natural resources conservation and management as a reference tool for United Nations agencies and development partners. ECLAC also completed a study of gender mainstreaming in selected Caribbean countries, which was submitted to the Third Caribbean Conference on Women, in October 1999, and a women in development newsletter on gender-related regional programmes and activities was posted on the ECLAC women in development home page which was created in 1997.

Operational activities

56. Within the ECA region, the former African Coordinating Committee on the Integration of Women in Development was transformed into the Committee on Women and Development, with revised terms of reference and membership, including NGOs and individuals serving in their personal capacity. ECLAC emphasized activities to strengthen the capacity and catalytic role of national machineries for the advancement of women, and in collaboration with the Division for the Advancement of Women organized an expert group meeting on national mechanisms for the advancement of women. As part of its activities to strengthen the capacity of national governments to mainstream a gender perspective, ECLAC supported a project to incorporate the gender perspective in the training activities to be conducted by the Association of Mayors and City Council Members. The Huairou Commission, a non-governmental umbrella body dealing with women and habitat issues, has been supported by Habitat and advises it on gender concerns. UNFPA assisted national bodies with responsibility for gender equality issues by providing institutional support, training and technical assistance for national committees, parliamentarians and gender/women and development units in ministries. UNFPA also provided support to national and regional women's NGOs in order to increase their involvement in policy-making, and encouraged technical cooperation among developing countries as a mechanism to promote sharing of experience within and among countries. For example, UNFPA supported the creation of five South-South centres to encourage sharing of successful experience. Similarly, UNICEF provided training to government and NGO personnel in countries in several regions, including Egypt, where two national meetings for NGOs from seven governorates were organized. UNICEF has also provided technical and financial support for the

expansion of women's affairs focal points into a variety of government ministries in Ethiopia, and for Uganda's gender mainstreaming framework and strategy. In the context of its development cooperation activities and in order to advance the status of women in public administration and promote and support the development of intellectual property institutions, WIPO has been formulating a series of regional management training seminars for women heads of intellectual property offices in developing countries.

Public outreach and information dissemination

57. Department of Public Information activities to increase awareness of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women included the production of television programmes on the Commission on the Status of Women. ECLAC posted a directory of national machineries on its web site in May 1999 and established a mechanism to update the site. The *Wall Chart on Basic Social Services for All, 1997*, produced under the auspices of the ACC Task Force on Basic Social Services for All by the Population Division, in collaboration with other Task Force members, highlights goals of the recent major United Nations conferences, including the Fourth World Conference on Women, and contains statistical data relating to the major quantitative goals relating to basic social services.

IX. Human rights of women

Information collection, data development, research and analysis

58. During the reporting period, several entities prepared research studies on questions of women's human rights, while others ensured that their broader research integrated women's human rights. For example, both ECA and ECLAC prepared documents on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in their regions, with ECLAC producing research documenting progress in legislation since the adoption of the Convention and an analysis of how far juridical systems in Latin America promote women's equality. Studies by the ILO on discrimination against migrant workers have incorporated a gender dimension. UNICEF's Tehran office has initiated the collection of information on Iranian children and women with a view to creating a multimedia Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/Convention on the Rights of the Child database, and has also conducted a study comparing the Islamic Republic of Iran's national laws with the requirements of both Conventions. UNICEF has also supported a similar study with regard to Lebanon. The Division for the Advancement of Women prepared a study on the integration of a gender perspective into the work of the human rights treaty bodies which was submitted to the tenth meeting of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies, in 1998.

Operational activities

59. Among operational activities undertaken during the period were workshops and meetings aimed at clarifying broad-based women's rights issues, as well as at mainstreaming the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Committee.

60. The Division for the Advancement of Women organized a workshop on the rights-based approach to women's advancement and empowerment and gender equality in October 1998. The meeting, which was hosted by FAO, sought to clarify how a rights-based approach affects policy formulation and implementation, and brought together members of the Inter-agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) Working Party on Gender Equality. The Division also organized a workshop for members of IACWGE and the OECD/DAC Working Party on Gender Equality on women's empowerment in the context of human security, hosted by ESCAP, in December 1999. In collaboration with UNIFEM and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Division for the Advancement of Women organized a three-day workshop in May 1999 on gender integration into the United Nations human rights system for human rights special mechanisms and chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies. In collaboration with the Office, Habitat held an expert group meeting on practical aspects of the realization of the human right to adequate housing which, *inter alia*, recommended that the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women develop a general recommendation on women, discrimination and housing rights. UNICEF supported the training of

Bolivian indigenous women on issues of human rights, and in collaboration with over 40 governmental, non-governmental institutions and United Nations entities established the rights of women and girls programme, which promotes reform of legislation, the training of officials in rights and gender issues, and an outreach campaign on girls' rights in Mexico.

61. To commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the General Assembly, with the financial support of UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP and other donors, the Division organized a judicial colloquium on the application of international human rights law at the domestic level for senior judicial officers from all regions. ESCAP supported a subregional meeting on the promotion of women's rights as human rights, focusing on violence against women, which documented successful practices in the prevention and elimination of violence against women in the subregion. ESCAP launched a project to promote the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination in the region, in the context of which four country-specific information kits to promote community awareness were prepared. In collaboration with UNDP and the secretariat of the Pacific Community, ESCAP also organized a consultative meeting for Pacific countries on the Convention. UNIFEM also executed projects in support of the Convention, including its global-to-local training project, which has provided training for over 50 women's rights activists to strengthen implementation of the Convention at the local level. In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNIFEM sponsored a training-of-trainers round table on the Convention. Within the framework of the human rights policy which it adopted in 1998, UNDP has supported activities at the country and regional levels to strengthen women's enjoyment of human rights and has supported the preparation of Convention reports by States parties. UNFPA also supported the preparation of CEDAW reports by States parties, and has prepared an operational guide for its field officers and geographical divisions to increase awareness and understanding of the Convention as well as to strengthen the UNFPA rights-based approach to the implementation of its programmes. In addition to providing assistance for the preparation of States parties' reports, UNICEF has supported ratification efforts. UNICEF has also organized several training workshops on CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including in the Central African Republic, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. UNICEF also supported workshops to encourage the integration of the two above-mentioned Conventions into the law school curriculum in Jordan, Lebanon, the Sudan and Tunisia, while vernacular stories highlighting the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women were prepared in Zimbabwe. The Division for the Advancement of Women organized a training workshop for nine francophone African States parties to develop capacity for the preparation of initial reports in accordance with article 18 of the Convention.

62. Specific projects on women's rights were also carried out by several entities, including the ILO, whose training and information dissemination on women workers' rights project operated in nine countries in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America. The project, which ended in March 1999, resulted in the establishment of national tripartite steering committees and the design and implementation of joint action plans to promote women workers' rights and equality of opportunity and treatment for them. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights supported the establishment of a women's human rights unit in a non-governmental organization in Palestine which is engaged in legal research and education and provides legal aid to individual women and women's groups. In El Salvador, the Office has also been assisting Parliament in formulating legislation on violence against women, and has developed training materials and conducted training for police and prison officers on this issue. UNFPA has supported a review by a consortium of NGOs of national laws and policies that promote or hinder women's reproductive rights, and through its country programmes supports NGOs so that they can document and monitor human rights violations.

Public outreach and information dissemination

63. Department of Public Information activities on the human rights of women highlighted the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. A panel was organized on women and human rights on International Women's Day 1998, and during 1999 an

information kit was widely distributed to mark the twentieth anniversary of the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as well as its Optional Protocol. Television and radio programmes on the human rights of women, workshops and publications, including a chapter of the 1998 edition of *United Nations Briefing Papers on Human Rights Today: A United Nations Priority*, also addressed the human rights of women. ECA outreach activities included the release on International Women's Day 1998 of a publication on the gender dimension of human rights education, while radio programming, panel discussions and theatre productions on specific women's rights issues were also organized. A number of UNICEF outreach activities focused on the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. For example, it has supported the production of materials on the Convention in Lesotho, including in local languages, as well as in Nigeria.

64. ILO outreach activities were mainly concentrated on the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 1998, which addresses, *inter alia*, effective elimination of child labour and discrimination in employment and occupation, issues of direct relevance to the rights of women workers. The ILO training package on women workers' rights was also translated and adapted to national needs. In 1999, the Division for the Advancement of Women prepared an issue of *Women2000* on the integration of gender into the work of the human rights treaty bodies.

X. Women and the media

Information collection, database development and research and analysis

65. During 1999, the Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM and INSTRAW conducted on-line working groups on the Beijing Platform for Action's 12 critical areas of concern via WomenWatch, the joint Internet gateway on women and gender. The results of the working groups will be compiled into a report to be made available to the preparatory committee for the special session and to the special session of the General Assembly, to be held from 5 to 9 June 2000.

Operational activities

66. During the reporting period, most United Nations entities used media strategies to advocate for change in regard to the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action. Several also engaged in activities to sensitize the media to gender issues and to increase the participation of women in senior positions in media.

67. In preparation for the ECA fortieth anniversary conference on African women and development and in order to guide media coverage, ECA organized a gender and media workshop. Projects sponsored by UNICEF in Malawi, Nepal and the United Republic of Tanzania have been aimed at raising the awareness of media professionals on such issues as gender mainstreaming and gender sensitivity in the media and with regard to the two above-mentioned Conventions. UNICEF and the Nepal Press Institute have signed a memorandum of understanding to implement a series of media-led initiatives at community, national and regional levels. In 1998, in collaboration with local NGOs, UNIFEM created a Latin American advertising festival award for non-sexist advertising, which was won by a one-minute programme on domestic violence. UNESCO created four community radio stations which promote literacy and basic education to be run by women in India, Nepal, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. Through its Women on the Net project, UNESCO also strengthened the involvement of women in electronic communication, and promoted exchange between women on culture and new communications technology, while in collaboration with several partners UNESCO provided training in Latin America for women in journalism in modern communications management techniques and the production of television news programmes.

Public outreach and information dissemination

68. Radio programmes, including on the International Women's Media Foundation Courage in Journalism awards, were produced by the Department of Public Information, which also supported panels and workshops on the role and status of women in the mass media, including at UNICs in Armenia, Kazakhstan and Tunisia.

XI. Women and the environment

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

69. Several studies related to this critical area were prepared during the reporting period, including on gender, the environment and the sustainability of development by ECLAC, while UNU has documented success stories of women in natural resources management enterprises. Research initiated by ECLAC in late 1999 will document the impact of natural disasters from a gender perspective in two subregions.

Operational activities

70. Support has been provided by entities for women's participation in water and environmental sanitation programmes. For example, UNICEF has prepared a manual to assist programme officers in mainstreaming a gender perspective into water, hygiene education and sanitation programmes. It has also included a separate chapter on mainstreaming gender in such programmes in its programmers guide to gender mainstreaming, which has been field-tested. In India, UNICEF has also provided training for women so that they can work as pump mechanics, and supported training on safe sanitation for women in Nigeria. Training courses on the protection of the environment have also been supported by UNICEF in the Islamic Republic of Iran, while UNICEF women's cooperatives in Mauritania have managed to cut water costs to a third of their previous levels and increase household water consumption in 200 households. UNICEF efforts in Honduras have been targeted to increasing women's capacity to negotiate and participate in water and sanitation programmes, with the result that there has been increased participation by women in water boards and as voluntary health visitors, plumbers and water sellers. Training seminars on the use and management of water have also been provided by UNESCO to women in Mauritania and South Africa, while FAO has trained women members in water users' associations in Cambodia, Nepal and Zambia in order to facilitate their equitable participation in water interventions.

71. UNDP and UNIFEM have developed a comprehensive programme to promote renewable energy technologies for women in Ghana and Nigeria. UNIFEM also assisted UNDP in revising guidelines for its small grants fund on global environment facilities for Belize, Guatemala and Mexico to ensure that 25 per cent of grants would be allocated for women's projects. In 1998, Habitat organized a workshop on gender-responsive environmental planning, which provided the basis for a source book on gender-responsive environmental planning and management. ILO activities in this critical area have emphasized occupational health and safety and improving the working environment, including in occupations dominated by women.

Public outreach and information dissemination

72. Several Department of Public Information activities aimed to increase public awareness about the role of women in environmental management and sustainable development. For example, in 1999, the Antananarivo UNIC linked the observances of International Women's Day and World Water Day, while the Rabat UNIC organized an exhibit for International Women's Day which focused on the United Nations global conferences on development and environment.

XII. The girl child

Information collection, database development, research and analysis

73. Three data sets on child mortality by sex for Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean were released by the Population Division during the reporting period, while among the topics highlighted by version 4 of the Women's Indicators and Statistics Database produced by the Statistics Division is the education of women and girls. Methodological approaches for conducting child labour sample surveys were developed by the ILO, and it conducted child labour surveys in 12 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean. Analyses of the situation of girls and women from the life-cycle perspective and in the context of the two above-mentioned Conventions were supported by UNICEF in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, Nepal, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa and Zambia. An analytical study of gender differences and child mortality, *Too Young to Die: Genes or Gender?* was published by the Population Division. UNICEF has also supported studies on progress achieved in Asia in this critical area, as well as a literature review of Filipino child-rearing attitudes and practices and gender socialization. Other studies supported by

UNICEF included research initiated in 1998 to investigate the incidence of female prenatal sex selection and its influence on sex ratios.

Operational activities

74. Operational activities of UNICEF in this critical area have been directed to increasing awareness of sex-discrimination against girls and the self-confidence of girls. Projects include the girl child project in Maldives, which incorporates career counselling for secondary schools and aims to empower girls, and the meeting the development and participation rights of adolescent girls project, which in collaboration with NGO, intergovernmental and United Nations partners, has been initiated in 13 countries. The project aims to provide adolescent girls with access to information, education, learning, health services, recreation and opportunities to participate in society. In collaboration with the All China Women's Federation, UNICEF is also executing a project initiative in China to establish public education guidelines. The first phase of this project, completed in 1998, examined sociocultural causes for discrimination against girls, while phase two, carried out in 1999, included a workshop for policy makers and the development of a training manual to raise consciousness with regard to the issues. Phase three will develop public education strategies and materials to address concerns.

75. UNFPA supports information, education and communication activities aimed at parents, teachers, local leaders and others on, *inter alia*, the importance of girls' education, their protection in the educational system, the negative effects of early pregnancy and marriage and harmful traditional practices. It also supports programmes, including that of the Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation, which provide support for adolescent mothers, particularly with regard to their education.

76. The ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour continued to support the development and implementation of country programmes of action to prevent and eliminate child labour, with the girl child being listed among the groups most vulnerable to the worst kinds of child labour and trafficking. During 1999, the International Labour Conference adopted a new ILO standard to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. One of the projects supported by the Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women was directed at preventing girls in orphanages and boarding schools from being caught up in trafficking.

Public outreach and information dissemination

77. UNICEF has supported the development of Meena, a cartoon character, and Sara, the subject of a radio series, who provide role models for girls and provide a forum for the discussion of sex discrimination in childhood. Meena, a South Asian character, has been the subject of a 13-episode animated film series which has explored son-preference, early marriage and dowry, while Sara, developed for southern Africa, has provided a platform to discuss the importance of girls staying in school, genital mutilation and domestic workload. Both the Meena and Sara initiatives include related items, including facilitators' guides, storybooks and children's education materials, which have been adapted to the needs of various countries.

78. UNICEF produced a video on gender issues in the classroom, as well as posters directed at raising gender awareness for South Africa. In India, UNICEF supported The Girl Child Week. The Working Group on Girls of the NGO Committee on Girls served as the official task force on girls at the forty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which for the first time heard the views of girls in an official meeting in its consideration of the implementation of this critical area of concern of the Platform for Action. In addition to preparing position papers and facilitating panel discussions, the Working Group supported the participation of 15 girls from eight countries at the session and hosted a "Listen to girls" forum.

79. Department of Public Information activities in this critical area included the production of films, organization and participation in films, briefings and meetings on such issues as sexual exploitation of and violence against the girl child.